

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CU-04 COME-00 BIB-01 IO-13
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 NSCE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4595
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 0432

FOR EUR/RPM AND EUR/SOV FROM USDEL CSCE

E O 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, PCPM
SUBJ: BELGRADE CSCE: SOVIET LINGUISTIC EFFORTS TO DOWNGRADE
SIGNIFICANCE OF BELGRADE MEETING

REF: BELGRADE 310 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: A SOVIET EFFORT TO DOWNGRADE SIGNIFICANCE OF
BELGRADE MEETING IS BECOMING EVIDENT IN DISPUTES WHICH ARE
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CROPPING UP WITH INCREASING FREQUENCY ON WHETHER ITS
CONCLUDING DOCUMENT SHOULD CHARACTERIZE DECISIONS AND
CONCLUSIONS AS MADE BY "THE PARTICIPATING STATES." WHILE
THE ISSUE IS RELATIVELY ABSTRACT, SOVIETS EVIDENTLY
SEE IT AS FACTOR IN DETERMING POLITICAL IMPORTANCE
THAT WILL BE ATTACHED TO MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. DEPT WILL RECALL THAT SOVIET REPS OCCASIONALLY MADE POINT TO THEIR COLLOCUTORS BEFORE PREPARATORY MEETING WAS CONVENED THAT BELGRADE MEETING WOULD HAVE AN IMPORTANCE CLOSER TO THAT OF AN EXPERTS MEETING THAN OF HELSINKI AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY IT COULD TAKE DECISIONS ON AT MOST A HANDFUL OF RELATIVELY INSIGNIFICANT ITEMS SUCH AS CONVENING OF SWISS EXPERTS GROUP ON PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES. FOR THE REST, THEY SUGGESTED, REPRESENTATIVES WOULD MERELY REPORT DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS. THIS ISSUE APPEARED LARGELY TO HAVE BEEN DECIDED DURING PREPARATORY MEETING WHEN POINT 6 OF AGENDA, WHICH MAKES CLEAR THAT BELGRADE MEETING IS EMPOWERED TO TAKE DECISIONS, WAS ACCEPTED.

2. A VARIANT OF THIS ISSUE APPEARS NOW TO BE RESURFACING HOWEVER, IN WAKE OF SOVIET EFFORT TO FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE SHORT, RELATIVELY GENERAL DRAFT CONCLUDING DOCUMENT THEY TABLED JANUARY 17. IN THAT DOCUMENT (REFTEL), SOVIETS NEVER USE UNADORNED PHRASE THE "PARTICIPATING STATES" WHICH IS LANGUAGE REGULARLY EMPLOYED BY FINAL ACT TO EXPRESS COMMITMENTS. INSTEAD THEY USE SUCH TERMS AS "THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PARTICIPATING STATES... APPOINTED BY MINISTERS;" AND THE "PARTICIPANTS TO THE MEETING." TO GET AROUND LOGICAL PROBLEM THAT PARTICIPANTS IN THEIR OWN CAPACITIES COULD SCARCELY AGREE TO CONVENE BREZHNEV-TYPE BASKET TWO CONFERENCE OR

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EXPERTS GROUPS, THEY DRAFT "THE PARTICIPANTS ON BEHALF OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS UNANIMOUSLY EXPRESSED THE VIEW" AND "ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THEIR GOVERNMENTS, THE PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED THE VIEW..."

3. BY CONTRAST TEXTS INTRODUCED BY BOTH THE ALLIES AND THE NEUTRAL/NON-ALIGNED ON GENERAL POLITICAL CONCLUSIONS, ASSESSMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION AND NEW PROPOSALS FOLLOW FINAL ACT GUIDELINES BY SPEAKING OF JUDGMENTS AND DECISIONS OF THE "PARTICIPATING STATES." THAT THIS ISSUE REFLECTS A RECENT SOVIET DECISION TO ATTEMPT ONCE MORE TO DOWNGRADE STATUS AND THEREFORE POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF BELGRADE MEETING IS SUGGESTED BY FACT THAT EASTERN NEW PROPOSALS INTRODUCED DURING AUTUMN AND NOW IMPLICITLY WITHDRAWN IN FAVOR OF SOVIETS' BRIEF CONCLUDING DOCUMENT TEXT ALSO HAD FOLLOWED FINAL ACT FORMAT BY REFERRING TO DECISIONS OF THE "PARTICIPATING STATES." SAME EFFORT TO MINIMIZE BELGRADE MEETING, INCIDENTALLY, IS EVIDENT IN FOLLOW-UP DRAFTING GROUP WHERE SOVIETS ARE INSISTING THAT BELGRADE MEETING SHOULD NOT NECESSARILY BE REGARDED AS SETTING PATTERN FOR A MADRID MEETING

4. ISSUE HAS ARISEN IN INCONCLUSIVE FASHION IN EARLY STAGES OF DRAFTING IN SEVERAL DRAFTING GROUPS. BRACKETS HAVE ALREADY BEEN EMPLOYED ONCE IN BASKET TWO TO SIGNIFY DIFFERENCE OF OPINION AS TO WHETHER ONLY REPRESENTATIVES OR PARTICIPATING STATES THEMSELVES SHOULD BE REFERRED TO AS UNDERTAKING COMMITMENT. AS DRAFTING GROUPS INCREASINGLY MOVE FROM CONSIDERATION OF FACTUAL LANGUAGE TO CONSIDERATION OF LANGUAGE EXPRESSING COMMITMENTS, IT WILL PROBABLY APPEAR WITH MORE FREQUENCY AND MOST LIKELY WILL HAVE TO BE SETTLED AT PLENARY LEVEL.

5. ISSUE IS POLITICAL RATHER THAN LEGAL SINCE, LIKE FINAL ACT, BELGRADE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT WILL EXPRESS POLITICAL AND MORAL RATHER THAN LEGAL COMMITMENTS. AS
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A RESULT, OPTICS WILL COUNT FOR MUCH. SOVIETS OBVIOUSLY REALIZE THAT THERE MUST BE SOME FORMULA SUCH AS "ON THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE GOVERNMENTS" TO SHOW THAT PARTICIPANTS HAVE AUTHORITY AT LEAST TO CONVENE FOLLOW-UP MEETINGS. THEY APPARENTLY BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT EMPHASIS ON REPRESENTATIVES AS OPPOSED TO PARTICIPATING STATES WOULD REDUCE SIGNIFICANCE OF ANY CONCLUSIONS REACHED OR NEW COMMITMENTS MADE AT BELGRADE.

6. WHILE ISSUE IS NOT ONE OF FIRST RANK, WE INTEND TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT FORMULATIONS DEVELOPED IN ALLIED AND NEUTRAL/NON-ALIGNED TEXTS THAT WOULD EMPHASIZE POLITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SUBSTANTIVE MATERIAL ULTIMATELY INCORPORATED IN BELGRADE CONCLUDING DOCUMENT.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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